

**WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE:
HOW DREAMS CAN HELP IDENTIFY COUNTERTRANSFERENCE IN ORGANIZATIONAL RESEARCH**

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ABSTRACT

Where the study of organizations involves prolonged or deep engagement with informants, the research experience can generate psychodynamic reactions. Countertransference – or the redirection of a researcher’s emotional response onto informants – is one such reaction, and can influence data collection, analysis and presentation. The methodological question then is how to identify and act on countertransference reactions during research. Drawing on psychoanalytic approaches, we suggest that researchers’ dreams can serve as methodological resources in enhancing reflexive practice. We illustrate our approach with an auto-ethnographic account of 199 days of fieldwork with a Cambridge Boat Race crew, and outline several recommendations to help organizational researchers keen to see how they, and their dreams, are implicated in their work.

Keywords: ethnography, countertransference, dreams, psychoanalysis

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To be human is to be subject to psychodynamic reactions. As organizational researchers, our training in methods is unlikely to perfectly inoculate us from these reactions, and the more immersive or prolonged our research is, the more likely we are to experience them (e.g. Brannick & Coghlan, 2007; Cunliffe & Alcadipani, 2016; Lofland et al., 2006). Countertransference (CT) is one such reaction. It was developed in psychoanalysis to describe the process by which psychoanalysts unconsciously redirect or project their own emotional responses onto a patient (Etchegoyen, 2005) and has been identified as a valuable source of reflexivity as well as data by psychoanalysts (Devereux, 1967; Gemignani, 2011; Holmes, 2014; Kernberg, 1965). These emotional responses may have little to do with the patient in question and more with the psychoanalysts' personal history. Via a similar mechanism, CT reactions can occur when researchers describe their informants as exhibiting, for example, anxieties, fears, aspirations or inclinations that may actually be their own. Its identification is considered valuable as it allows researchers to reflect on the extent to which they are implicated in their work.

In this paper, we suggest that psychoanalytic techniques can help researchers self-analyze manifestations of CT, including certain thoughts, feelings, images, fantasies, and *dreams* (Stone, 2006). Devereux, for example, believed dreams to be a helpful resource when it came to identifying CT and, in his landmark study of 440 cases of CT in behavioral science experiments, provided examples of his own dreams to illustrate how they exposed his own blind spots, emotions, and inhibitions (Devereux, 1967, p. xv). Likewise, Malinowski (1967) was no stranger to dreams, his legendary fieldwork among the Trobriand islanders often leaving him to ponder his own.

This paper proposes that dreams may be of methodological interest to organizational researchers generally and, specifically, to those involved in organizational ethnography (Ybema et al., 2009), participant observation (Spradley, 2016), and action research (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014). Yet while trained psychoanalysts can diagnose and reflect on CT during a therapeutic relationship, we may struggle to recognize our own CT responses and to put them to reflexive use. The question then is how to identify and act upon CT during fieldwork and data analysis?

Our objective here is to better understand how an awareness of CT can help enhance research practice and how dreams can play a role in CT identification. Our contributions are threefold. First, we promote a core tenet from psychoanalytical theory, namely CT, which has remained conspicuously absent in discussions of methodology and reflexivity within our field. We have refrained from providing an extensive discussion of reflexivity because the topic has already been relatively well covered, including in this journal (for recent examples see Dougherty, 2015; Hibbert et al., 2014; Whiting et al., forthcoming). Second, we outline a particular approach to identifying CT by means of a novel empirical illustration. Third, we offer a set of broad, alternative, analytical approaches for researchers with different epistemological orientations keen to explore their dreams. While qualitative accounts will invariably be judged by different criteria than their quantitative counterparts (Gephart, 2013; Gioia et al., 2013; Prasad & Prasad, 2002), the ultimate aim of these analytical approaches is to ensure methodological rigor. While the example used throughout the paper is in the ethnographic tradition, our recommendations have wider currency in organizational research.

The paper is structured in three sections. First, we revisit the relevant literature on CT identification and dream analysis in psychoanalysis to provide a context for our contributions. Second, we proceed with an empirical illustration – an auto-ethnographic account of fieldwork with an elite rowing crew – to show how dreams can help identify CT in a research context.

Third, we explore ways in which dreams might be usefully employed by researchers from various epistemological orientations, and conclude with recommendations to help those who wish to put dreams to use methodologically.

COUNTERTRANSFERENCE AND DREAMS

While early examples of psychoanalytic approaches to organization studies have been around for at least 65 years, they gained in prominence in the 1980s (Gilles, 2012). For example, Tranfield (1983) studied the psychodynamics of organization development consultants to explain their behavior in organizational settings. Diamond (1986) focused on resistance to change at individual and organizational levels by re-examining the cognitive psychological assumptions of Argyris and Schon's (1974; 1978) contributions to organizational learning. Schwarz (1987) developed a psychoanalytical perspective into totalitarian aspects of the corporation, based on such psychoanalytic concepts as "narcissism", "ego ideal", and "splitting". Schnider and Dunbar (1992) developed a psychoanalytic reading of hostile takeovers between organizations in an attempt to illuminate important social dynamics generated by them. Kets de Vries (1996) provided a novel understanding of the work behaviours of entrepreneurs, describing their complex "inner theatre". Driver (2008) outlined a psychoanalytic perspective on creativity in organizations as an imaginary construction of the self and, more recently, relied on psychoanalysis to explore how researchers engage with their subjects so as to "account for the lived experience of subjects under study while producing knowledge about and for them" (Driver, 2016). Such approaches have introduced a range of psychoanalytic concepts and techniques to studies of organization, including CT and dream analysis.

Countertransference

Coined by Freud in 1910, CT refers to the process by which the psychoanalyst's emotions are redirected towards and/or projected onto patients during analysis. These reactions can interfere

with analysis and are not determined by the patient's disorders or personality but often rooted in the psychoanalyst's self and personal history (Blake & Ramsey, 1951; Devereux, 1967, p. 41-42; Fliess, 1953). Devereux (1967) is closely associated with the initial diffusion of CT in the social sciences after having appropriated the term to describe the degree to which a researcher's psychological and physiological attributes can manifest themselves in data gathering, recording and analysis. CT can cause researchers to act on their own unconscious emotional reactions rather than what might otherwise have been their professional opinion, suggesting that an awareness of it could be helpful in improving their reflexivity and research.

While CT was initially viewed as the result of a psychoanalyst's unresolved neurotic conflicts (Freud 1959), psychoanalysis came to consider it as the inevitable consequence of therapist-patient interaction (Heiman, 1950; Little 1951), and today it is acknowledged as an important source of exploration for the improvement of the here-and-now of a clinical relationship (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983; Mitchell, 2000; Gemignani, 2011). CT responses are often described as "narratives" that are actively constructed through interactive narrations and interpretations between parties, and highlight the experience of one person by another as grounded in another's personal history (Zepf et al., 2007). The most common of CT reactions are: (a) positive (e.g. the experience of a positive working relationship, (b) overwhelmed/disorganized (and thus a desire to avoid or escape strong negative feelings), (c) helpless/inadequate (or feelings of inadequacy, incompetence, hopelessness, and anxiety), (d) special (or a sense of the other as being special, giving rise to difficulties in maintaining boundaries), (e) sexually aroused, (f) disengaged (or distracted, withdrawn, annoyed, or bored), (g) parental/protective (or a wish to protect and nurture beyond what would be considered normal), and (h) criticized/mistreated (or being unappreciated, dismissed, slighted, or devalued) (Betan et al., 2005). While CT often involves a unique combination of one or more of these response types, they are mostly

unconscious, posing a challenge for organizational researchers who work in empirically rich contexts and who may struggle to identify where they project their own feelings onto informants. It is here, we propose, that dreams provide an opportunity for researchers to explore their own psychodynamic reactions.

Dream Analysis

Dreams are “images, ideas, emotions, and sensations that occur involuntarily in the mind during certain stages of sleep” (American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 2014), up to seven times a night for an average individual (Carskadon, 1993; Domhoff, 2003). According to Freud, dreams are highly symbolized visual products of perception based on everyday experience. He acknowledged dreams to have outstanding importance in understanding the interaction between the conscious and unconscious (Peters, 1998). “The interpretation of dreams”, Freud wrote, “is the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious activities of the mind”. It was a discovery he maintained until the end to contain “the most valuable of all the discoveries it has been my good fortune to make” (Freud, 1953, p. 3).

Since Freud, extensive research programs into the nature and role of dreams have been developed in psychiatry (e.g. Ullman, 2001), psychology (e.g. Mazzoni, 1999), and cognitive and neuroscience (e.g. Domhoff, 2003). Yet, our understanding of dreams and their relationship to brain activities remains nascent and contested (Moffitt, Kramer & Hoffman, 1993; Solms, 1997). While some think dreams to be accidental by-products of our neural activity and meaningless (Kahn, Combs & Krippner, 2002), others believe dreaming to be “a required activity contributing to higher level functions” and anything but disorganized and accidental (Greenberg & Perlman, 1999, p. 575). Some argue that dreams help prepare us for the challenges of life by simulating physical or emotional threats (Barrett and McNamara, 2012; Greenberg & Pearlman, 1975) or by helping us resolve personal trauma (Mellman et al., 1995). Others suggest that, when dreaming,

our brains engage in extensive information processing to consolidate necessary connections and undo undesirable associations so as to enforce learning and unlearning (Greenberg & Perlman, 1999; Karni et al., 1994). We know, for example, that we tend to extend our dreaming time when needing to learn complex tasks (De Koninck et al., 1977) or to integrate new information into procedural memory (Pearlman, 1982; Hennevin & Leconte, 1977). Dreams are widely considered to reflect the activation and recombination of memories of waking experience, where both these memories and associations to them may be altered in the process (Hartman, 2010; Nielsen & Stenstrom, 2005; Stickgold et al., 2001; Wamsley & Stickgold, 2011). They can cause us to weep, laugh, feel rage, to be paralyzed with fear, to experience profound love or sexual arousal. They can reflect individual growth (Bulkeley, 2010) and emotional adaptation (Cartwright et al., 1998; Lara-Carrasco et al., 2009). It is perhaps for these reasons that dreams are considered useful in generating novel theoretical (e.g. Schredl & Erlacher, 2007; Spaulding, 1981) and practical insights (e.g. Kets de Vries & Manfred, 2014), and offer us a rare window into our subjectivity and our relationships. For example, dreams by a psychoanalyst about a patient indicates CT and reflect issues “in the analyst or in the analysis” (Brown, 2007, p. 839). They also represent “a special instance of the analyst’s coming to know the patient while ... sleeping” (p. 852), “a means by which the psychoanalyst is coming to unconsciously *know*” (p. 839) the patient. The relationship needs to be “unwrapped, so to speak, through the analyst’s self-analytic work” (p. 852). Psychoanalysts are expected to consider their own dreams in their various analytic relationships so as to be able to identify CT reactions and, if necessary, change the analytic process in the interest of advancing their understanding of the patient (Spangler et al., 2009).

In similar vein, Lester, Jodoin, and Robertson (1989) discovered that 78% of Canadian psychoanalysts reported having CT dreams, most of which occurred when patients were angry or

experienced strong erotic transference, or when psychoanalysts had problems in understanding patients and/or were about to introduce a new element into the therapeutic process. These psychoanalysts also reported that their dreams provided insights into their therapeutic relationship and their own subjectivity. Similarly, Kron and Avny (2003) found that 65% of a sample of Israeli psychoanalysts had reported dreams about their patients involving negative emotions, usually in response to patient aggression, or the invasion of the analyst's personal space, leaving them to feel betrayed, abandoned, and forsaken (Spangler et al., 2009). The authors suggested this may be due to difficulties in the therapeutic relationship, or to the psychoanalysts' unresolved personal problems such that they over-identified with particular patients. They concluded that dreams can be usefully deployed to help psychoanalysts understand their past experience or current behavior in the therapeutic process. Similarly, Hill et al. (2014) concluded that analyzing dreams provided good opportunities for psychoanalysts to face themselves and their therapeutic work.

While everyone dreams on any given night, not all dreams are equally productive in identifying CT. If a patient – or in the case of research, an informant – appears in the manifest content of a dream, this indicates the likely presence of CT. Generally, for a dream to qualify as worthy of analysis for CT it should be *impactful* (Busink & Kuiken, 1995) such that one remembers it upon waking and is able to provide a description of it. Impactful dreams are typically anxiety dreams (or frightening dreams that generate feelings of uneasiness, apprehension or fear), transcendent dreams (or ecstatic dreams with magical features), or existential dreams (or distressing dreams that involve separation or one's personal integrity) (Kuiken & Sikora, 1993).

To aid in the analysis of dreams, Freud developed a method according to which patients describe their dreams and ideas triggered by them using a “free association” technique to gather

therapeutic insights into suppressed problems of the past and the present. Uncovering the latent content of dreams is often to reconstruct the “forgotten” life histories of patients. In using this classical technique, dreams are not treated any differently than other materials available during a therapeutic session. While Jung agreed with Freud on many aspects of dreams, they disagreed on how these were to be interpreted. Jung differed from Freud in his analysis of dreams, preferring to focus on archetypes – universal symbols in dreams – instead. The most common of these archetypes are, he thought, the anima/animus, the divine child, the wise old man, the great mother, and the trickster. While dreams remain unique to the individual, he thought these archetypes to represent universal and fundamental structures in the psyche of all humans (Jung, 1974). In Jungian psychoanalysis, patients are asked to return to dream images and the emotions associated with them and, suspending judgment, to describe what these mean to them, what their shape is, what function they serve, and what images remind them. Patients are invited to “talk to”, or interrogate, the image or the symbol under analysis, and asked to continue to “carry” an irritating or annoying image (usually of themselves) during the day so as to be able to reflect on feelings generated through the day and perhaps uncover deeply-buried issues in one’s personal history.

There are also more objectivist forms of dream analysis in the psychoanalytic literature. For example, Hall and Van de Castle (1966)’s coding system is widely employed to code dream content, to search meaningful regularities in dream narratives, and to classify dream elements (e.g. characters, social interactions, activities, misfortunes, emotions, settings, and objects), which may then be relied on in the interpretation process (Bulkeley & Domhoff, 2010). Domhoff (1999, 2000) provides detailed descriptions on the methodology of content analysis of dream narratives. Other objectivist techniques also exist for detecting bizarreness, emotional expression, and shifts in visual imagery in a dream report. For example, Merritt et al. (1994) examine emotions in

dream narratives using structured reports that allow for dreams to be analyzed in terms of categories that are thought to be relevant across cultures. By contrast, Sutton et al. (1991, 1994) and Sutton and Hobson (1991) use quantitative analysis to focus on continuity and discontinuity of visual imagery in narrative reports, aimed at locating bizarreness objectively.

While objectivist approaches remain relatively marginal, and free association the dominant technique, psychoanalysis has moved towards a more interactional understanding (Ermann, 1999). For example, Greenberg and Pearlman (1999) suggest dreams to be a particular language for portraying problems and mobilizing mental resources to help resolve them, and it is imperative that dreams must be interpreted concurrently with active problems at the time of dreaming. In this perspective, free associations are still dream-centered but the analytical process focuses on understanding not just the dream content in relation to one's personal history, but on generating a hermeneutic understanding aimed at revealing CT (Goodison, 1995).

Hermeneutics, broadly speaking, is the processes of interpreting the "inner" meanings of signs and texts, as well as of human actions, experience, and existence (Dilthey, 1989; Heidegger, 1962). While originally a technique for textual interpretation, it was developed into "the specific method of the cultural sciences" (Radnitzky, 1973, p.214; Berg & Smith, 1985; Gauld & Shotter, 1977; Gergen & Gergen, 1986; Sass, 1988; Cheshire, 1975; Will 1986). According to Heidegger, hermeneutics seeks to advance in-depth descriptions of being through participation and openness (Steele, 1982, p.346). It pursues this typically in terms of the enactment of an individual's life story (Palmer, 1969, p.125. Gadamer described it as a "meeting of horizons", where the capacities of people to understand, make meaning, and communicate meet in a particular historical and cultural context. As these capacities are necessarily limited and demarcated, dialogue is required (Gadamer, 1997).

A hermeneutic interpretation of a dream is thus an in-depth phenomenology of a dream and a “meeting of horizons” of the dream owner and the interpreter facilitated by dialogue (Steele, 1979, 1982). The emerging overall conceptualization – which results from an ongoing dialogue between the dreamer, the therapist, and the emerging interpretation (Radnitzky, 1973) – is evaluated in a circular and continuous manner known as a “hermeneutic circle”. The interpretation of a single dream should also be evaluated against other dreams of the same person around the same time to see what, if any, additional insights that may provide. Freud's and Jung's approaches to dreams can be viewed as hermeneutical in that each sought to understand dream meanings and consistent, evolving “narratives to re-story patients’ lives” (Siegel, 1983). The goal of interpretation, they reasoned, was to create multiple narratives out of the dream under focus, and not to force the dreamer’s condition into any preconceived schema.

The choice of which dreams will, and will not, be subjected to analysis has important implications (Ermann, 1999). In fact, the therapeutic session itself is considered a potential manifestation of an unconscious CT process, and dreams are one input into that session. Given the premium placed on context, this approach establishes a stronger connection between dreams and waking life. It seeks to promote creative associations with dream images, and thus potentially multiple, dynamic, and occasionally competing, interpretations of a dream. While dreams alone may not give “astonishing deep insights that emerge from exhaustive dream analysis, patients’ associations to dreams lead them to unexpected memories, reflections and disclosures” that are helpful in identifying CT (Yalom, 1998, p. 423).

In the next section, we illustrate how dream analysis can help identify CT reactions in an auto-ethnographic account of 199 days of fieldwork with a Cambridge University Boat Race crew (see also de Rond, 2008; King & de Rond, 2011; Lok & de Rond, 2013).

CASE STUDY: DETECTING COUNTERTRANSFERENCE USING DREAMS

The Cambridge University Boat Club (CUBC) today exists for that same singular purpose for which it was founded in 1828: to defeat its rival Oxford in The Boat Race. Rowed in late March or early April (when the weather is at its most unpredictable), the four-and-a-quarter mile racecourse usually takes around 18 minutes to complete. What remains a private affair between two universities has become a public spectacle: every year some 250,000 people line the banks of the Thames with an estimated 120 million tuning in via television or radio. The 2007 Cambridge crew, on which the ethnography is based, included a former Olympic gold medalist and world champion, two reigning world champions, and an oarsman who went on to win two Olympic gold medals and three world championships in succession. As an amateur sport, and without being able to offer financial assistance to sportsmen, it continues to attract athletes of the highest caliber.

The empirical work began on the crew's first day of training and continued until Boat Race day, comprising over 1,300 hours of full-time, *in situ* observation of the squad by the first author, as the ethnographer during the fieldwork. He was provided access to CUBC archives of past year races, rowing books and magazines and some 1,500 pages of historical documentation on the Boat Race. He was copied on e-mail correspondence to the oarsmen, generating a record of some 350 individual e-mails, including announcement, training schedules, test results, pranks, banter, as well as conflicts between the crews and coaches. He kept detailed written records of observations and conversations during the day. Separately, he maintained a set of "head notes" to keep track of his own thoughts during the period of observation. The "dream journal" was subsumed in these head notes.

During the fieldwork period, 19 impactful dreams were recorded in detail. Of these, we selected four dreams to be analyzed by two practicing psychoanalysts. Each worked independently and without knowing whether anyone else had been invited to also provide

interpretations. The four dreams were selected by applying two criteria: (1) the extent of their impact (or the degree to which they were felt, at the time, to have been particularly disturbing) and (2) the degree to which they seemed to potentially reflect different types of CT reactions. This “sampling” strategy is not dissimilar from that advocated by Pettigrew (1988), Eisenhardt (1989) and Eisenhardt and Graebner’s (2007), who suggest that given time and resource constraints, qualitative researchers are limited in terms of how many cases they can realistically study, and so it makes sense to include the most extreme cases in the sample.

The two independent psychoanalysts invited to interpret these four dreams work within different theoretical traditions. Dr. White (PhD in Psychoanalysis) practices in London and is a member of the College of Psychoanalysts (UK). A Jungian psychoanalyst, he is also a member of the International Association of Analytical Psychology. Dr Black is a Freudian psychoanalyst.¹ She also practices in London and is accredited with the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy, the British Psychoanalytic Council and as a Supervisor with the Institute of Group Analysis. Both psychoanalysts responded to an e-mail invitation sent to a small group of UK-based accredited practitioners, educated to PhD level in their fields. They volunteered their services for this project and worked independently, by means of therapeutic sessions (allowing the ethnographer to provide them with some context) and a written report of their systematic analyses.

We revisit these dreams and their analyses below. They are intended to serve as examples of how impactful dreams can provide indications of CT. Each of the four dreams is followed by the CT reaction identified, and an explanation of what the ethnographer subsequently did in response. We offer these interpretations to explore how researchers with different

¹ Dr White and Dr Black are pseudonyms

epistemological orientations might go about analyzing their own dreams, and how they might subsequently deepen their reflexive research practice.

An analysis of dreams during the fieldwork

Below are four dreams in chronological order. They point to recurring anxieties: identity and identification, sexuality and survival, meaning that the ethnographer might be over-identifying, soft-pedaling, failing to exploit or omitting some of his observations for anxiety avoidance. To provide some context, we begin with short description of the dream to illustrate the richness of the material, which might otherwise get lost in an analytic discourse. This is followed by interpretations of each dream, including the identification of CT and proposed courses of action for enhancing the research process. It is important to note that these enhancements are provided as illustrations of how they can be, and were, deployed by the ethnographer. They do not necessarily exhaust every aspect of reflexivity available in the extant literature.

Dream 1

"I seem to be in a playhouse but it's not one I recognize. It's a theatre all right, even if it has none of the usual telltale signs: no velvety chairs (no chairs at all as far as I can make out), no heavy curtains, and no chandeliers, and the stage looks fatigued, its floorboards stained with the residue of once popular but long since forgotten pantomimes. On the stage, and around me, are children, two dozen in all, but too short for their age and too tetragonal too, like characters out of a mean Japanese comic. They smile at me incessantly without a care in the world save to please me, all but their faces obscured by banded fluorescent costumes, so that with the lights dimmed all one sees are blue, green, yellow and orange lines dancing around in black space... I appear to have been cast as a lion but have difficulty

putting on a credible performance and can't seem to make up my mind whether to stand on my hind legs or make do on hands and knees, and I don't now recollect how the matter was decided in the end, but I do recall a faint hum as if from a distant world, annoying and yet strangely familiar. I have no idea why I'm here or why I was cast as a lion, or who these little people are and what my relationship is to them ... "

Using Kuiken and Sikora's (1993) typology, this appears to be an anxiety dream, and the correspondent CT a feeling of being overwhelmed (Betan et al., 2005). The phrase *"it's a theatre all right, even if it has none of the usual tell-tale signs"* seems to suggest a co-existence of the familiar and unfamiliar for the ethnographer, indicating potentially feeling overwhelmed, with some level of disorganization at the research field, the place is theatre-like, even if bits of it are not. One interpretation might suggest that the ethnographer's familiarity with the broader canvas (or the recognition of this being a theatre) reflects at least a basic understanding of the world of rowing as an experienced oarsman. His own experience is based at 'club' (or town) level, meaning that plenty of mystery remains in terms of selection, competition at the level of internationally competitive oarsmen and the inner workings of a 180-year old institution. In some ways, the ethnographer seems to project the emotions of novice oarsmen onto him, with *"difficulty putting on a credible performance"* and feeling strange with others asking *"why am I here... or who these little people are and what is my relationship to them"*.

The ethnographer's affiliation to novices might be explained in terms of his own anxiety as a novice ethnographer and newcomer to the CUBC, with a feeling of potential helplessness and inadequacy. From his fieldnotes:

"Let's break some hearts this morning!" Duncan looks up from his laptop. I'm invited to stay too, to witness my first 'binning' exercise, one of many to come, no doubt, as he summons the first half-dozen boys. It's pretty heartless, frankly, but then selection invariably is, no matter that the boys walk into this eyes wide open. Having been summoned to the upstairs room, they are well aware of what's about to hit them. Their body language says it all."

With regards to CT, the dream would seem to indicate some combination of finding himself as “disorganized” and feeling “helpless/inadequate” at the research field. He feels distrustful and repulsed, feeling hopelessness and fear. In order to avoid this feeling, he had actually been avoiding some parts of the ethnographic data, leading to withdrawal, omission and over-involvement on some other more familiar subjects.

This indication of potential omission and over-emphasis as a CT reaction is relevant. Taking the familiarity for granted, firstly, in failing to record some things because they are so much part and parcel of rowing training and secondly, in assuming that things in Cambridge mean what they mean at the club level caused him to under-record. Moreover, given the standard at which Cambridge operates, the performance margins are much smaller and yet far more important than at a club level. In Cambridge everything counts, every land training exercise and every water outing provides information to coaches and informs selection of who will be on the boat on the final day. At a club level it is usually only the formal tests (usually 2,000 or 5,000 meter sprints on the rowing machine) that matter. By contrast, the exotic risks being emphasized over the ordinary, and hence making the ethnographer lose a sense of perspective.

Unfamiliarity, on the other hand, may have helped the ethnographer to better relate to any alienation experienced by those equally new to the environment. Of the 38 oarsmen who started

with Cambridge that year, about two thirds were new to the CUBC. Thus it is perhaps no surprise that the early field notes contain very detailed descriptions of novices making an effort to integrate, for instance by means of relating anecdotes or jokes. That he is 'on stage' seems to suggest some self-consciousness on his part as if he is being watched. Can he live up to expectations and put on a credible performance? Are the novices as awkward as he is in finding their way?

Also, the choice of the role of lion in the dream is an interesting one and may point to some anxiety around the researcher's identity. While there is no animosity between the lion and Japanese characters, lions remain predators. One explanation might hint at an implicit recognition that ethnography may ultimately lead to betrayal; for the field accounts will rarely match the recollections and opinions of those involved very precisely (cf. Van Maanen & Kolb, 1983). The ethnographer may also be soft-pedaling, or of trying to please through self-censorship, for example by glamorizing the lives of those involved.

In laying bare these CT responses, the ethnographer became more acutely aware of his over-identification with novices, and spent time cultivating relationships with those more experienced as well as 'testing' for anxiety experiences on the part of both groups by means of casual conversations before and after training. He also reconsidered his social location and attitude within the field.

Dream 2

"I find myself in a classroom not quite like my teaching rooms in Cambridge but a little like them, and in it are my work colleagues, managing to pull off what must be the worst presentation ever. The crowd is getting restless as I am, about the total lack of empathy on the part of my peers, and I decide to make a stand and march

out angrily into a dark hallway leading to a holiday flat somewhere in Spain; and as I come walking in, my wife comes walking out of the apartment pushing a pram with a newborn inside it. Must be mine, I think, but I have no recollection of making or anticipating it... The apartment is cloaked in twilight, the air not yet advanced to complete darkness, but it soon will be - and it all feels rather ominous. I switch on the lights in one room, but while this solves one problem it creates another, as the other rooms in the apartment now look even more inhospitable than they already did. I'm conscious of something dark moving behind me - not a person but the shadow of one. I freeze. The apartment, however, is eerily quiet. My heart, beating rapidly, has sought solace at the back of my throat. There's no one in this room but me. The adrenaline surges through my system, veins throbbing noisily in my head... "

This dream might be classified as an existential dream (Kuiken & Sikora, 1993), and the corresponding CT as a feeling of being criticized (Betan et al., 2005). As both psychoanalysts independently pointed out, this second dream appears to relate to the ethnographer's persistent fear – and what at the time seemed a very real possibility – of being asked to leave the club that, in turn, would cease his research. The dream occurred during a particular poignant time. Some of the more senior members of the club (most of whom rowed for Cambridge in years past) had become concerned about his presence in the squad. They worried that, without a veto over his output, his writing might put the organization at risk. So a particularly unpleasant battle ensued over editorial control, forcing the University to intervene on his behalf, and nearly causing him to be evicted. Thus, the *"I'm conscious of something dark moving behind me - not a person but the*

shadow of one" seems a pertinent reflection of his emotional state of being at the time, as criticized and mistreated by the others. The fieldwork notes also revealed the similar situation:

"I met with a representative of the Old Blues this afternoon. Who the hell do they think they are to threaten to throw me out of the squad? Have they no regard at all to my stakes in the matter? There is no empathy on their part whatsoever. Just fear and paranoia, thinking somehow that I am the moral equivalent of a ragtag tabloid journalist out to make a quick buck by digging up whatever dirt he can find. These people are meant to be honorable, genteel Cambridge men. I feel offended, hurt, frustrated and, mostly, very alone."

This dream, upon analysis, encouraged the ethnographer to verify that oarsmen were in fact experiencing something similar to what he himself was feeling. Subsequent conversations with squad members suggested that different emotions are experienced between those new to the squad, those not new but borderline candidates for the Blue Boat (or top crew), and internationally decorated oarsmen, many of whom appeared certain of a place in the Blue Boat.

Our own hermeneutic analysis suggested that the classroom context that marks the beginning of the dream might suggest recognition of artificiality in the research field: *"... in it are my work colleagues, managing to pull off what must be the worst presentation ever. The crowd is getting restless, as I am, about the total lack of empathy on the part of my peer..."* The functionality of the presentation and its lack of empathy might imply a growing frustration at the denial of real feelings - theirs as well as his -generating a sense of restlessness and the hunkering for some more humane context. This would ordinarily be provided at home with his wife and children, except that, as the *"... there's no one in the room but me..."* suggests, the ethnography is taking its toll and a split is developing between the ethnographer and his roles as husband and

father. Like the squad who sacrifice college life (or their 'home from home') to train with the CUBC, the ethnographer had little option but to watch his family life disintegrate in the shadow of his professional commitments. The CT reaction here might imply over-involvement, on the one hand, and withdrawal on the other, suggesting that the ethnographer risked losing his critical perspective on the phenomena around himself. With the signaling of this CT, a recommendation would be working on self-confidence, social position, and research motivations of the ethnographer

Dream 3

“Last night I dreamt my wife had a penis”

While the journal entry may be pithy, the anxiety it generated was anything but. The dream would be categorized as an anxiety dream (Kuiken & Sikora, 1993), and the correspondent CT involves a feeling of inadequacy (Betan et al., 2005). According to the Jungian analyst, given his upbringing as a child of missionaries in a particularly conservative Christian environment, the male nudity on daily display inside the boathouse caused the ethnographer to reflect on his own body. The causal, confident, even predatory, manner in which male sexuality was flaunted by ‘the boys’ (even in the presence of their female coxswain), and homoeroticism, generated a fair amount of anxiety as to whether he did, or didn’t, measure up as a man. The rowers were physically impressive and sexually predatory, years of intensive training having sculpted their bodies into something close to the ideal male form of Michelangelo’s David (with one notable exception). As he wrote in a popular account of Cambridge’s 2007 Boat Race campaign:

“I shuffle my way onto the plastic bathroom floor, drop my boxers, and study myself in the bathroom mirror. Having seen how well hung the squad are, I’ve become fixated on my own member. I look down past my stomach, turning now sideways and then facing

forwards, varying the angle, the object the same, the point the same. I examine its reflection in the cracked mirror, mount the tub, turn the taps, and draw the curtain.” (de Rond, 2008, p. 73)

Our own hermeneutic analysis contributed an alternative perspective on this CT reaction. What this dream might reflect is the ethnographer’s recognition of these male bodies and what that awareness might imply about his own sexual orientation. Did him finding these bodies beautiful suggest he might be harbouring homosexual tendencies that hitherto he had not been aware of? To what extent did his aesthetic appreciation of their male bodies feed a tendency to idealize the oarsmen, their physical perfection being manifest of an inner perfection? These were, after all, Cambridge University students, carefully selected on the basis of academic promise and not eligible for a sports scholarship, and generally very bright and articulate. Also, as one of the psychoanalysts had pointed out, the dream might be revealing of a struggle, both on the part of the crew as well as the ethnographer, to complete the final stretch of their Boat Race preparations successfully, where each harboured secret thoughts as to they were ‘man enough’ for the task. Facing own subjectivity than may help the ethnographer to be more critical with the informants.

To glamorize informants (by comparison to the self) may cause one to become insufficiently critical of one’s observations of ‘the other’. Anxieties around his own body, and a tendency to idealize the bodies of oarsmen may, in the process, cause him to idealize them beyond their physical appearance. Thus, a reflexive ethnographic practice would require the ethnographer to strengthen his self-confidence, and on calming the body by, for example, mindfulness practice during and after the fieldwork. Finally, being aware of the risk of being insufficiently critical should encourage the ethnographer to take a more critical stance towards his data, or at least, maintain some form of ‘neutrality’ about the people in the field.

Dream 4

“I seem to be standing in a large hall – something like a sports hall but a particularly large one – at what appears to be a ceremony to formally announcement Xchanging’s commitment to sponsoring another five years of The Boat Race. David Andrews (CEO), his wife and two daughters sit in four adjacent metal chairs, dressed expensively and quite out of place. Aside from journalists and photographers, the audience is made up of CUBC and OUBC’s squads. It is unclear what year these squads represent – 2007 or 2008, or maybe both – as I recognize people from the 2007 squad (like David Hopper) but am also acutely cognizant of us being a losing squad (which would seem to refer to 2008). Everyone is dressed in toggle tops (dark blues for OUBC, light blues for CUBC). Everyone’s messing about, there’s lots of noise, lots of laughter. I stand with the CUBC squad though dressed in a dark blue toggle top, for reasons that aren’t clear to me. Then again, Hopper seems to be wearing an OUBC top as well. Curious that. [I wasn’t, at the time, conscious of the fact that he would indeed be wearing an Oxford dark blue toggle top soon in switching sides and going to race for Oxford in the boat race] It is time for a group photo – one that will feature both the CUBC and OUBC squads and an Xchanging banner announces their continued sponsorship. The rowers are to line up against the red brick wall behind them (the banner in front of them). Unsure of what to do, I decide to remain with the CUBC squad and ‘in the picture’. “de Rond!” one of OUBC’s support team calls out suddenly and loud enough for everyone to hear, and motioning me away from the photo. It is clear that I have no place in this photo. The tone of his voice has a

sense of predictability about it, as if he's said something similar (or if not said then thought) before. I am feeling hugely embarrassed, particularly for this being such a public affair. Then again, no one else seems to care. It is clear that everyone knows I so desperately want to belong – to be one of the boys – clear to everyone but me. The walls have come crumbling down. I'm transparent, exposed, wafer thin."

To have informants from the fieldwork appear in this dream suggests a CT reaction. It is an existential dream (Kuiken & Sikora, 1993), and the correspondent CT involves a feeling of being criticized (Betan et al., 2005). What appears clear from this dream – something both the independent psychoanalysts, and we, were quick to spot – is a sense of ambivalence of being “found out” and exposed as a traitor. The ethnographer stands with the Cambridge Crew but wears Oxford colours, unsure as to which Crew to join for the photographs. He opts for Cambridge. Yet one of the Oxford crew motions him away with a “sense of predictability”, as though they know he does not belong. After all, the ethnographer was a graduate student at Oxford before joining Cambridge, and rivalries run deep between supporters of either university.

This fourth dream came after the ethnographer had released an early draft of a chapter from this book that, while enjoyed by the oarsmen, was taken great exception to by those who had rowed for the university in past years and had become very protective of the organization. In the highly charged context of training for the Oxford-Cambridge Boat Race, an unspoken question (for both ethnographer and crew) would have been whether the ethnographer was really “on their side”. He was presumably grateful for the opportunity to observe and participate in the preparations, but this suspicion would likely have added to the pressure not to show any sign of disloyalty or support, an impossible ideal, with the consequent fear of being exposed as in this dream.

In our hermeneutic analysis, we recognized that the dream might point to a familiar problem in ethnography, namely the betrayal that often accompanies it (e.g. Brettell, 1996). The success of fieldwork hinges on the abilities of the researcher to establish enduring relationships with informants, and then to consider the data critically. To make public what informants might prefer (sometimes with hindsight) to have remained private, and to write critically, can lead to accusations of betrayal. After all, people are likely to take an interest in what you write, and are often more than willing to talk back. As one of the assistant coaches wrote upon reading “*The Last Amateurs*” (de Rond, 2008), the ethnographer’s account of the 2007 Boat Race campaign, he had always vigorously opposed publication of the book as it showed up some of the difficulties inside the club. He thought the book distasteful.

The ethnographer was keenly aware of the suspicion with which he had become viewed by the older generation of rowers, even if the squad remained staunchly defensive of the ethnographer’s presence and writings, and the force of their reaction had caused him to reflect on how the squad and wider community might react upon the publication of a full and uncensored account, leaving the ethnographer in a special/over-involved relationship with the squad. Our analysis of this dream pointed at the real risk of the ethnographer self-censoring for fear of standing accused as traitor. To be reminded of this risk encouraged him to remain candid with the material in writing the ethnography but also to protect those who needed protection, particularly if doing so would not have changed the ethnography substantially. Moreover, in writing up his account, he compensated for the candour with which he treated the squad but being equally candid about himself, his own insecurities and foibles. A summary of the recommended research enhancements based on the analysis of these four dreams are provided in Table 2.

Insert Table 2 about here

DISCUSSION

Dreams are rarely offered up for discussion (Levine, 1981, p. 277-278). This may be due in part to the risk of the researcher being seen as self-indulgent or overly narcissistic, because doing so is fraught with personal or professional risk (Boyle & Parry, 2007), outright dangerous (Lee, 1995; Rose, 1990; Kleinman & Copp, 1993), good material for gossip (Stoller, 1997), or simply because scholarship has not demanded it. Yet for researchers embedded in particularly alien environments, it is helpful to record and reflect on their dreams to identify potential CT reactions, as yet another feature of the reflexive process that is par for the course in organizational research.

There has been increasing interest in using psychoanalytic approaches to advance our understanding of organizations and the methods we use to study them. We intend this paper to be a contribution to that conversation by focusing on psychodynamic approaches to the identification of CT, and by using this awareness to enhance our reflexive practices. Consistent with psychoanalytical approaches and advances in dream research, we suggest that dreams provide an untapped resource for organizational researchers keen to identify CT reactions in their data collection, analysis, and presentation. Given that our daily internal conflicts – conscious and unconscious – are known to trigger emotional responses and defense mechanisms, these conflicts are likely to also be manifested in our fieldwork when awake, and in our dreams while asleep. To refuse to acknowledge our CT reactions risks disregarding an important input into our research practice.

Given the emotional intensity of fieldwork, dream records would seem to be useful repositories of empirical material, able to help us identify where our fieldwork may potentially involve CT. The experience of emotions is, of course, not confined to our dreams, and dream

analysis is almost certainly not the only, or even principal, means of identifying CT. However, their analysis may encourage us to be vigilant of our own reactions to our interactions with informants, and the implications thereof for the integrity of the dataset. Occasionally their identification may call for gathering additional data, possibly from informants who, hitherto, have taken a back seat data-wise, or to engage in conversations with the unstated aim of verifying that what one believes to be the case actually is.

Strong emotions, such as anxieties around issues of identity and identification of survival and failure may introduce systematic influences in the collection and interpretation of field data, possibly through reticence or disclosure (Lyons & Lyons, 2004, p. 250; Lofland et al., 2006; Cunliffe & Karunanayake, 2013). Had it not been for an effort to take his dreams seriously, the first author would likely have continued to over-identify with the CUBC squad, have generalized levels of anxiety experienced by novice oarsmen to the whole squad, have over-glamorized the oarsmen, and have written an insufficiently critical account of The Boat Race campaign.

While this paper focused on the example of fieldwork as a particular way of “doing” research, there is evidence to suggest that other forms of qualitative research are likewise subject to CT reactions. For example, Clarke (2002, p.174) describes how the feelings of an interviewing researcher are projected onto interviewees. Similarly, Marks and Monnich-Marks (2003) find that participants’ transferences are projected on the researcher. Stromme et al. (2010, p.221) explains how, in emotionally charged interviews, CT reactions may be used to “gain access to more unconscious process in the participant”. Such CT reactions may even be manifested in the dreams of researchers generally, meaning that their most impactful dreams would be worthwhile analyzing for CT identification.

Quantitative research may also be subject to CT. For example, it may well be the case that problem selection is likely to be a function of a researcher’s self even when using the scientific

method (Lofland & Lofland, 1995). Thus, if quantitative researchers have impactful dreams about their research topic, data collection, or analysis, then they may be at risk of losing the objectivist stance their methodological rigor is there to safeguard. They may, in the interest of controlling for any “biases”, choose to consider their dreams for CT reactions. While CT may be more relevant to qualitative researchers, the advanced reflexivity we propose here should be applicable to any form of research that relies on social interaction for its production. In interview-based studies, for example, a researcher might lack clues as to how to interpret what is relayed by the other, and this uncertainty can generate CT. Or it might be that researchers overplay the empathy card by asking follow-up questions that are designed less to help them understand the mindset of the interviewee and more to make oneself more likeable, more knowledgeable, or more credible. Leading questions can betray assumptions on the part of the researcher that are not necessarily mirrored by informants. Besides, researchers can easily mistake “presentational” for “operational” data (Van Maanen, 1979).

Our assumptions as researchers can be brought into play in different ways as well. Van Maanen (1973; 1988) wrote of an incident he witnessed while embedded with the “Union City” police force, where two officers had manhandled a stand up drunk such that he ended up in intensive care. His account – which makes for sober reading even today – highlights the risks of “overrapport”, or the degree to which a particularly close relationship between researcher and informant may impact on the integrity of the fieldwork. By going native, the researcher has effectively compromised on the critical distance required to ask difficult questions.

Paying attention to dreams and anticipating CT can afford researchers an opportunity to heighten their emotional awareness towards a more reflexive research practice. Throughout the fieldwork, researchers would be well served by giving credence to their cognitive, affective, and behavioral reactions to their informants and data. Following critiques by Van Maanen, Manning

and Miller (in Kleinman & Copp, 1993,p. viii), we argue that, rather than trying to avoid our emotions at a research site, we might wish to direct our efforts to understand, express and report our emotions, as part of a relationally reflexive research practice (Hansen & Trank, 2016; Hibbert et al., 2014; Cunliffe & Karunanayake, 2013; Lofland et al., 2006), that accounts for a variety of tensions and emotional interactions that often take place in field research.

There are means of CT identification other than dreams. One of these is the self-identification of emotions and physiological reactions to fieldwork such as excessive sweating, dryness of mouth, shortness of breath, or feelings of shame or angst. By the same token, psychoanalysts tend to keep an eye on their own emotional reactions during therapeutic processes. While useful indicators of CT reactions, they do not usually provide the richness of dreams, leaving dreams as a particularly powerful, readable available source. Using dreams for CT identification also helps researchers to differentiate CT from any emergent feeling they may develop during fieldwork. CT is “an instrument of research” (Heimann, 1950, p.51), rather than a label of, or apology for, the researcher’s feelings, and any “uncritical use of CT” should be avoided (Heimann, 1960, p.153). Not every feeling indicates a CT reaction (Sandler, 1993; Holmes, 2014), and it is here that the hermeneutic exploration of dream data in relation to a researcher’s experience can be helpful in differentiating ordinary emotions from CT reactions.

Perhaps our strongest argument for CT identification through dream analysis is a methodological one: the first author might very well not have noted the influence of CT had he not decided to record and offer up his dreams for analysis. Developing an awareness of ourselves as manifested in our dreams, may also be generative in preventing premature closure in our fieldwork and in forcing us to ask questions we may not otherwise have asked. As Stein suggests:

“Just as the observer seeks to control and diminish that facet of countertransference that distorts, the observer or analyst seeks also to give freer reign to the facet of

countertransference that reveals ... Greater access to one's unconscious, together with increased capacity to hold onto anxiety and examine the unconscious contents it signals ... would seem to be key ways of distinguishing the countertransference that *reveals* from the countertransference that *conceals*.” (Stein, 2000, p. 351)

The difficulty in attempting to analyze CT during data collection and analysis is that it complicates already difficult matters such as those of perception, inference, interpretation and generalization (Stein, 2000, p. 367). And yet the case for taking CT seriously is compelling:

“When one learns via countertransference, one is including, incorporating and examining something within oneself, temporarily identifying with what one takes in and contains. When one does not learn via countertransference, one is excluding, expelling and ridding something from oneself. The former leads to greater integration, the latter to greater fragmentation.” (Stein, 2000, p. 347)

A further complication relates to dream interpretation. If, as we have argued, they are methodologically relevant, how and by whom, are they to be interpreted? While analysis by a trained psychoanalyst can provide for more rigor, doing so can be costly, time-consuming and impractical when deeply embedded in fieldwork. Psychoanalysts typically prefer long-term therapeutic relationships where dreams can be analyzed in context. If neither budget nor time is a constraint, those aiming to immerse themselves in environments that are particularly unfamiliar may benefit from entering into a longer-term therapeutic relationship. Where this is not feasible, an alternative approach would involve a careful recording and further analysis of dreams. This suggestion is based on the assumption that – for the specific purpose of identifying CT – it may suffice to identify anxieties, or other strongly held emotions, particularly fears and insecurities, as

reflected in dreams. To tackle the more difficult problem of locating their precise causes is probably not strictly necessary. The aim, after all, is to understand their potential implications methodologically, not therapeutically.

Specifically, our approach encourages researchers to maintain a written journal of dreams, recorded immediately upon waking and with the same concern for detail as with field observations. Dreams may force us to reveal how we really feel about our informants and with what consequences for our data, to test varying interpretations of the data already to hand, to collect further data or to subject existing data to further analysis, where we feel we might be having CT, to question whose voices speak loudest in the data and whether this is a fair representation of the field and generally to be more vigilant. This requires researchers to keep dream journals during their fieldwork and to record dreams remembered upon waking, as a matter of discipline, as people's memory of dreams tend to fade very quickly. That said, and as is often the case, practice makes perfect; our ability to recall dreams is a skill that will improve with repetition (Cartwright & Kaszniak, 1991; Chellappa et al., 2011).

Given their fleeting nature, dreams must be recorded and dated immediately as a matter of discipline. We suggest the ethnographer needs to be as descriptive as possible, writing whatever phrases, descriptions and associated ideas and feelings come to mind while recording. We also recommend drawing sketches of different images appeared to supplement their written descriptions. Thus, dream journals may have a distinctive richness and style with outbursts of words, emotions, icons and drawings. We suggest ethnographers record each dream in detail together with the prevailing emotions during and after the dream to reflect and to record the emotional richness as much as possible. It will also be helpful to provide an early self-reflection on each dream while recording so as to relate specific dreams to specific daily experiences. Thus, a dream journal would involve written and drawn records of what have happened or seen, notes

on prevailing emotions felt during and after, together with the self-reflection on the dream at the time of recording.

The dream journal can be subsequently analyzed using different techniques depending on the particular ontological and epistemological assumptions of the researcher. Some researchers may prefer self-analysis with a more interactionist perspective using psychodynamic techniques like free association (Hollway & Jefferson 2000), or to assume a more objectivist stance with a content analytic approach (Domhoff, 1999; 2000), or to summon the expertise of a psychoanalyst for the diagnostic process. Regardless of the approach, identification of CT using a dream journal represents an important step for developing our fieldwork.

Once a potential CT reaction has been identified, researchers can reflect on their footprint and any consequences by, for example, conducting further interviews or gathering additional observational data or even by revealing to field informants what they are feeling, so as to highlight the difference between respective experiences. One might choose to work in tandem with a fellow researcher who, even if not professionally trained, might nonetheless serve as a sounding board and interrogator to help promote a kind of an external supervision. Those with experience in fieldwork are preferable – if only because they are more likely to be empathetic to the emotional responses fieldwork can trigger – but this is not a requirement. Such colleagues could take on the supervisory role common in psychoanalysis practice, provided they are willing to work in the service of research and able to establish a confidential and safe environment for ethnographers to expose their vulnerabilities. In our case, the CT highlighted in the first author's dreams were arrived at independently by two psychoanalysts with a specialty in dream analysis, but without access to each other's interpretations, and subsequently reaffirmed by the second author independently. The psychoanalyst's analyses were richer than ours but, when confined to

the matter of CT, our interpretations were not far off the mark, and, in this particular case, would have recommended similar research strategies.

In this paper, we have encouraged researchers to develop a hermeneutic understanding of their own dreams as an option and, in doing so, foster an enhanced form of reflexivity even with limited or no professional help or supervision. A hermeneutic phenomenology of dreams seeks to reveal meaning through a process of understanding and (re)interpretation, and to elucidate lived experience as manifested in dreams. This might provide us with a way to deepen our understanding of our own self, allowing us to reflect on the meaning of our lived experience while awake, and thus providing an additional resource for reflection. To pursue a hermeneutic understanding of dreams is not only embraced in the psychoanalytic literature (Ermann, 1999) but it is consistent with the hermeneutic basis of the psychoanalysis generally (Steele, 1979; Packer, 1985; Scheafer, 1983; Terwee, 1990; Phillips, 1991; Orange, 1998; Franke, 1998).

It is inevitable that we approach our dreams with existing pre-conceptions and projections. Every interpretation is invariably based on particular assumptions about human behavior. Even so, little harm would seem to come from exploring whatever new understandings develop during the process of interpretation and, if useful, to return to the field to verify that what we think is the case actually is. By applying principles of hermeneutic phenomenology our aim was to go “beyond what is directly given” (Spiegelberg, 1982, p. 712), to read between the lines (Odman, 1988), and to discover what might have been omitted, silenced, or unquestioningly assumed. To that extent, we propose a set of hermeneutic principles for researchers to help them interpret their dreams:

- 1) Dreams must be interpreted in their immediate and broader context, considering every element of the dream;

- 2) Any impactful dream carrying a strongly emotional content deserves interpretation, even if their interpretation may not immediately lead to strong conclusions;
 - 3) Self-interpretation needs to focus on the emotional background and recurring thoughts in dreams that coincide with waking experience, preferably when in the research field;
 - 4) Self-interpretation of dreams should actively pursue multiple, even competing explanations, to be able to get a better handle on the complexity of emotions involved in the “doing” of fieldwork;
 - 5) Self-interpretation does not mean that professional interpretation or a supervisory opinion is not necessary or desirable. Where possible, professional help (even if only in the first few instances), or a colleague acting in a supervisory role, should be solicited;
 - 6) While one may use the method of free association to understand one’s emotional background, our self-interpretation does not mean that we may freely “distort” our dream records and notes, when we dislike the resulting interpretation;
 - 7) Self-interpretation may be influenced by personal prejudices, cultural conditioning, personal backgrounds, unconscious influences, occupational pressures and pride as researchers, and it is important to take these background elements into account.
- Integrity and transparency is, and remains, the basis of good fieldwork.

LIMITATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

This paper contemplated a simple proposition, the implications of which may not be straightforward. Moreover, the proposition that dream analysis can be a useful addition to our methodological toolkit is not unproblematic. Various caveats come to mind. For example, given that dreams are open to (re)interpretation (or even self-interested interpretation), how is the hermeneut to navigate this territory? Is everyone, regardless of experience and orientation,

“authorized” to re-interpret the first author’s (or anyone else’s) dreams? If not, what happens to scholarly dialogue? While our research may benefit from the additional reflexivity, there is also a cost in epistemic certainty, and it isn’t clear how these are to be weighed up against each other. While we have outlined several approaches to understanding dreams, their interpretation is necessarily a subjective process.

All human life is subject to psychodynamic reactions, including CT. The good news is that CT can be located and accessed using a variety of techniques and practices. We argue that emotionally charged dreams represent a mostly unexplored opportunity to reflect on our subjectivity. In this paper, we suggested a hermeneutic approach to dream interpretation as an alternative option to help researchers locate their CT reactions, and one in which dialogue is key.

Bearing in mind these caveats, we offer three specific contributions in exploring how dreams might be usefully deployed in CT identification in organizational research. First, our paper represents a methodological attempt to integrate a core psychoanalytical concept. CT is likely to be present in any form a social science research that involves prolonged exposure to human interaction. It is also an attempt to infuse critical social theory with psychoanalysis (Fotaki et al. 2012, p.1108-1109). In this way, we establish the importance of CT mechanisms in research processes, and develop a set of guidelines to identify and act on our CT towards generating a more reflexive research practice. It was never our intention to say something fundamentally new about CT per se but to provide organizational researchers with a hook to capture, and reflect on, the extent to which they are implicated in their research. A focus on CT detection through dream analysis will hopefully allow researchers to take their self-awareness to a higher level to reflect how deeply research is embedded in who they are as human beings. While our focus has been on qualitative organizational research, we suspect that positivist advocates of the “scientific method” may not be immune to CT. How we think about a research

topic, how we approach a problem, and virtually every stage of the research may be influenced by our psychodynamics. To acknowledge and “work” this fundamental bit of infrastructure of our research projects is to advance methodological rigor and transparency.

Second, we develop a novel approach to locate researcher subjectivity within our research using dreams, and have shown how this might work in practice with a real-life illustration. Our approach represents a call for organizational researchers to develop new sensibilities, and to improve their self-awareness by offering their own dreams up for discussion. While this seems relatively risky for the researcher, it has the potential take the reflexivity discussion further in organizational research. Third, our perspective elevates a much-neglected source of material from the proverbial “loony bin” to a relatively central position in enhancing research practice. We provide a set of guidelines to record and describe dreams practically during an ethnographic research process. We also provide a set of hermeneutic principles to develop an interpretive, contextual and phenomenological understanding of our own dreams, facing up to the most intimate parts of our own subjectivity. We hope our attempt illustrates how dream analysis might fit into general qualitative inquiries in organization studies, and to the role of dreams in facilitating this reflexivity. We also hope our approach might also be useful to researchers more generally, and to practitioners such as nurses and executive coaches, who face emotionally charged environments daily.

It would be nice to think these contributions might have sufficient bite to cause those lost for sleep to leverage what remains of the night to bare their souls so as to better understand how they – their foibles, anxieties, hopes and desires – may be entangled in their research.

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CT	Otherness in Dream	Potential Field Behavior	Plausible Research Strategies
Positive	These are friendly, likable, good people	The research appears to have established a positive working relationship with informants, and the data generated to date appears fruitful and meaningful	Continue with the current research strategy but be vigilant not to make “being liked” the principal objective of the research
Overwhelmed /Disorganized	These people are annoying, rude, overwhelming	The researcher may be seen as offensive and discourteous to informants	It may be worthwhile paying attention to one’s attitude in the field (without denying how one really feels about informants) for risk of limiting access to resources/data
Helpless/ Inadequate	These people can hurt me, make fun of me, show me I am worthless, stupid, etc.	The researcher is possibly withdrawing and not immersing herself/himself into the rich data of the research field	The researcher should work on her/his self-confidence and be a little more courageous in following up interesting observations/leads, even if doing so may be uncomfortable
Special /Over-involved	These people are special, beautiful, original, intelligent, capable etc.	The researcher may be insufficiently critical in handling data	The researcher needs to clarify her/his own assumptions, impressions, and knowledge of the research field
Sexualized	These people are attractive, sexy. I feel comfortable with them around me	The researcher is possibly creating advantageous conditions for the potential significant other in the research field	The researcher should develop a self-awareness of her/his behavior; understand her/his own motives, its effect on his analysis and understanding of the research field
Disengaged	These people are worthless and I am fed up spending time with them	The researcher is possibly at the edge of project cancellation or extensive withdrawal	It may be worthwhile paying attention to one’s attitude in the field for risk of limiting access to resources/data
Parental /Protective	That person needs help, advice, cannot survive without me	The researcher is possibly interfering with the research subject by providing advice or has strong doubts on abilities of the researched	The researcher needs to clarify her/his own attitudes and influences on the researched and the research field until that point
Criticized /Mistreated	That person mistreats and has some intentions about/against me	The researcher is possibly at the edge of extensive withdrawal from the research field or project cancellation	The researcher should work on her/his self-confidence and her/his self-motivation about the research

Table 1. Countertransference Examples and Plausible Research Strategies

Dream	CT	“the Other”	Potential Behavior	Recommendation
1	Overwhelmed / Disorganized	The research field	Withdrawing & not immersing himself	Work to increase self-awareness and self-confidence, as well as critical distance towards informants/data
	Helpless / Inadequate	The novice oarsmen		
	Special / Over-involved	Familiar subjects	Glamorizing some informants while ignoring others	
2	Criticized / Mistreated	The senior club members	Extensive withdrawal from the research field or project cancellation	Rework on self-confidence and social position. Verify other people’s emotions at the field.
	Special / Over-involved	The squad	Insufficiently critical of data/informants	
3	Special / Over-involved	The oarsmen	Idealizing informants	Work on self-confidence and calm one’s anxieties
	Sexualized			Try to be more critical with the informants
4	Criticized / Mistreated	The Senior club members	Non-exploitation	Remember the purpose and objective of the research: what are you here to do?
	Special / Over-involved	The squad	Self-censorship	

Table 2. Research enhancements based on the analysis of four dreams